

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA**

YOURGOS DIAMANTOPOULOS,

Petitioner,

V.

**CHARLES VENDITTE, WILLIAM
AGNEW, and STATE OF NEBRASKA,
et al.,**

Respondents.

CASE NO. 4:10CV3079

MEMORANDUM AND ORDER

This matter is before the court on Petitioner's Motion for Appointment of Counsel and Motion for Certificate of Appealability. (Filing Nos. [23](#) and [24](#).) On June 2, 2010, the court dismissed Petitioner's Habeas Corpus Petition without prejudice and entered Judgment against him. (Filing Nos. [18](#) and [19](#).) Petitioner thereafter filed a timely Notice of Appeal. (Filing No. [20](#).)

I. IFP Status

Petitioner is a prisoner who has previously been granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis. (Filing No. 14.) [Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 24\(a\)\(3\)](#) states:

(a) Leave to Proceed in Forma Pauperis

(3) **Prior Approval.** A party who was permitted to proceed in forma pauperis in the district-court action, or who was determined to be financially unable to obtain an adequate defense in a criminal case, may proceed on appeal in forma pauperis without further authorization, unless the district court—before or after the notice of appeal is filed—certifies that the appeal is not taken in good faith or finds that the party is not otherwise entitled to proceed in forma pauperis and states in writing its reasons for the certification or finding[.]

Id. The court finds that because Petitioner was previously given leave to proceed in forma pauperis, he may now “proceed on appeal in forma pauperis without further authorization” in accordance with [Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 24](#).

II. Motion for Certificate of Appealability

Before a petitioner may appeal the dismissal of a petition for writ of habeas corpus, a “Certificate of Appealability” must issue. Pursuant to the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (“AEDPA”), the right to appeal such a dismissal is governed by [28 U.S.C. § 2253\(c\)](#), which states:

(c)(1) Unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability, an appeal may not be taken to the court of appeals from—

(A) the final order in a habeas corpus proceeding in which the detention complained of arises out of process issued by a State court;

. . .

(2) A certificate of appealability may issue under paragraph (1) only if the applicant has made a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right.

(3) The certificate of appealability under paragraph (1) shall indicate which specific issue or issues satisfy the showing required by paragraph (2).¹

A certificate of appealability may issue only if the applicant has made a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right. See [28 U.S.C. § 2253\(c\)\(2\)](#). Such a showing requires a demonstration “that reasonable jurists could debate whether (or, for that matter, agree that) the petition should have been resolved in a different manner or that the issues presented were adequate to deserve encouragement to proceed further.” [Slack v. McDaniel](#), 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000) (internal quotation marks omitted) (citing [Barefoot](#)

¹Similarly, [Fed. R. App. P. 22\(b\)](#), as amended by AEDPA, indicates that in an action pursuant to [28 U.S.C. § 2254](#), a notice of appeal triggers the requirement that the district judge who rendered the judgment either issue a certificate of appealability or state the reasons why such a certificate should not issue. See generally [Tiedeman v. Benson](#), 122 F.3d 518, 521 (8th Cir. 1997).

v. Estelle, 463 U.S. 894 (1983) (defining pre-AEDPA standard for a certificate of probable cause to appeal)).

“Where a district court has rejected the constitutional claims on the merits, the showing required to satisfy § 2253(c) is straightforward: The petitioner must demonstrate that reasonable jurists would find the district court’s assessment of the constitutional claims debatable or wrong.” Slack, 529 U.S. at 484. Similarly, if the district court denies a petition for writ of habeas corpus on procedural grounds without reaching the underlying constitutional claims on the merits:

[A] COA should issue when the prisoner shows, at least, that jurists of reason would find it debatable whether the petition states a valid claim of the denial of a constitutional right and . . . would find it debatable whether the district court was correct in its procedural ruling Where a plain procedural bar is present and the district court is correct to invoke it to dispose of the case, a reasonable jurist could not conclude either that the district court erred in dismissing the petition or that the petitioner should be allowed to proceed further. In such a circumstance, no appeal would be warranted.

Id.

The court has carefully reviewed the record and Petitioner’s Motion for Certificate of Appealability. (Filing No. 24.) Petitioner has failed to demonstrate that reasonable jurists would find this court’s ruling debatable or wrong. For the reasons stated in its June 2, 2010, Memorandum and Order (Filing No. 18), the court declines to issue a Certificate of Appealability.

III. Motion to Appoint Counsel

Petitioner also seeks the appointment of counsel. (Filing No. 23.) However, “there is neither a constitutional nor statutory right to counsel in habeas proceedings; instead, [appointment of counsel] is committed to the discretion of the trial court.” McCall v.

[Benson](#), 114 F.3d 754, 756 (8th Cir. 1997) (citations omitted). As a general rule, counsel will not be appointed unless the case is unusually complex or the petitioner's ability to investigate and articulate the claims is unusually impaired or an evidentiary hearing is required. See, e.g., [Morris v. Dormire](#), 217 F.3d 556, 558-59 (8th Cir. 2000), *cert. denied*, 531 U.S. 984 (2000); [Hoggard v. Purkett](#), 29 F.3d 469, 471 (8th Cir. 1994) (citations omitted); see also Rule 8(c) of the [Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases in the United States District Courts](#) (requiring appointment of counsel if an evidentiary hearing is warranted). Upon review of the pleadings and Petitioner's Motion, there is no need for the appointment of counsel at this time.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

1. Petitioner's Motion for Appointment of Counsel (Filing No. [23](#)) and Motion for Certificate of Appealability (Filing No. [24](#)) are denied without prejudice to reassertion before the Eighth Circuit; and
2. The Clerk of the court shall provide the Court of Appeals a copy of this Memorandum and Order.

DATED this 7th day of July, 2010.

BY THE COURT:

s/Laurie Smith Camp
United States District Judge

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